exports. The strategy would examine the country and commodity specificities of our major exports along with macro issues affecting India's exports, and sector specific strategies.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The Government has identified 300 sensitive items where special monitoring is required. These items include agricultural commodities (including animal husbandry and dairy products), alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, rubber and its products, silk, marbles/granites/ceramics and their products thereof; motor vehicles, toys, writing instruments etc. In this context an Inter-Ministerial Standing Group consisting of the Commerce Secretary, Revenue Secretary, Secretary (SSI and ARI), Secretary (Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying), Secretary (Department of Agriculture and Co-operation) and the Director General of Foreign Trade has been constituted for tracking, collating and analyzing import data of these 300 sensitive items. Based on the analysis of imports of the sensitive items for the period April-June, 2001, the group has concluded that the imports indicate normal trading activity in response to demand and supply factors and that the present tariff structure and other steps are adequate to prevent any surge in imports.

Indo-Pak mechanism for tackling anti-dumping duties

2454. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Joint Indo-Pak Panel proposed to evolve a mechanism to face problems of anti-dumping duties on their products imposed by the developed countries; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) There is no proposal at present to form a Joint Indo-Pak Panel to evolve a mechanism to face problems in respect of imposition of anti-dumping duties on their products by developed countries.

Refusal by European retailers for buying Indian leather products

2455. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that European retailers have refused to buy Indian leather products as reported in Times of India dated the 5th July, 2001;

(b) whether it is a fact that thousands of cattle in India are being forced to walk days together before slaughter;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the animals taken to abattoirs have their throats hacked at with blunt blades and are skinned for leather bags and shoes even while they are alive; and

(d) if so, the measures Government intend to take to stop cruelty to animals meant for slaughter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) The Times of India on 5th July 2001, had reported People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) as stating that M/s Marks and Spencer, a UK-based international retailer, along with some other European retailers had decided to phase out its sourcing of leather products made out of Indian leather. However in a meeting the Chairman, Core Committee On Animal Welfare Programme, Council for Leather Exports (CLE), Chennai had with regional procurement officials of M/s Marks and Spencer on 3rd July, 2001 it was given to understand that they had not announced any boycott on sourcing Indian leather as published in certain sections of the Press. The Representatives of M/s Marks and Spencer assured CLE that they would continue to source leather from India as before, barring the products made of Indian cow hides.

(b) to (d) Incidences of cruelty to animals in transportation, abattoirs, etc., are punishable under existing provisions of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 (PCA) and rules made thereunder and action is taken by the concerned agencies whenever such cases come to their notice or are reported. Further, in order to take strict action against people or bodies responsible for cruelty to animals in transportation and in abattoirs, Government have amended the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Transport of Animals on Foot) Rules, 2001; "Transport of Animals (Amendment) Rules, 2001" and "Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Slaughter House) Rules, 2001" under PCA *vide* Notification Nos. 268(E), 269(E) and 270(E) each of these dated 26th March, 2001 respectively. Besides these statutory provisions, Government is also making coordinated efforts with the involvement of State Government for ensuring better enforcement of the existing provisions under PCA.

Boycott of Indian leather products in world market

2456. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state: